

# Meet Nombulelo Malinga, founder of Zizi Digital

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"As a young, Black female, I believe it's not only important to service clients but also to open up the digital floor to much needed conversations so that the campaigns we work on bring about real change," says Nombulelo Malinga, founder and director of Zizi Digital, which specialises in social media marketing and offers 360 digital consulting service.



As such, Zizi Digital have launched the #Zizi4Youth campaign and competition where one youth owned startup in South Africa could win R5000 in cash to help them in their entrepreneurship endeavors.

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Nombulelo Malinga shares more about Zizi Digital.

### ■ **Can you tell us more about Zizi Digital and what your role entails?**

Zizi Digital is a full-service digital marketing agency specialising in social media marketing. We offer social media consultations and workshops, PR and digital marketing. We are 100% Black woman-owned and a Level 1 BBEEE contributor with 135% procurement recognition.

As founder, I've had to do a lot of the groundwork in terms of defining the business and establishing key industry relationships. I now find myself actively involved in developing new business opportunities and implementing our business strategy to ensure that we achieve our financial vision, mission and long term goals.

### ■ **When, how and why did you get started?**

Believe it or not, the business officially started running a few months into the Covid-19 pandemic. In July, 2020 to be specific. I was most recently the social media team lead at an advertising agency based in Johannesburg. This is where I fine-tuned the art of managing teams, developing and implementing social media strategies and campaigns, as well as generally helping brands create their dream online presence.

The pandemic highlighted the need for businesses to adapt to a 'new normal' which I believe amplified the need for digital integration and digital marketing. So, I took this as the prime opportunity to put into practice the 10 years worth of industry experience and core learnings by working for myself and specialising in what I know best. My goal is to help businesses navigate these times from a digital perspective.

### ■ **What is the core function of Zizi Digital?**

Our slogan is "get the conversation going". At its core, that is creating more than a post or drafting a release in isolation.

*“ It means we aim to drive real change and achieve real impact by engaging in the relevant conversations digitally so that your business service or product has authentic and meaningful relationships with its audience. ”*

This then drives brand trust, loyalty and inexorably the purchase of your business services and/or products.

We make known our clients' products and/ or services in a way that best resonates with their intended audience to ultimately drive the purchase or use of the clients' products and services whilst portraying the brand in a positive, relatable light.

■ ***As a PR graduate and digital media enthusiast. What sparked your interest in getting into this arena?***

I've always been fascinated by the way a message can impact your purchasing decisions or even shape your views. I remember paging through magazines as a teenager and thinking to myself "before I could hold this magazine in my hands that's filled with fashion, my favourite brands and people's stories... Someone had to come up with an idea of what they wanted and what they wanted it to look like." I was so inspired by this!

I too wanted to be part of that group of people in the creative process with the power to inform, advertise to and guide audiences. The most influential way I believed that was possible was through being in the communications/media industry. As much as traditional forms of media and communication is what I was inspired by I knew that there was a more amplified and more measurable way to do this and so my love for digital began.

And no, this does not mean digital replaces traditional. It simply means there is an opportunity to further amplify a message and its reach through the use of digital platforms.

■ ***Can you tell us about your journey so far?***

It has been quite an interesting journey so far with a whirlwind of opportunities and experiences. I found myself exploring as many opportunities in the media and PR space. Including being a student radio personality, MC'ing, being involved in community projects and climbing the ladder from being an editorial assistant, community manager and eventually being a social media lead. I had to learn to stand for what I believe in, not give into workplace politics and follow my instincts. It has been quite the ride so far and I'm quite happy to be at a point where I now run my own business.

■ ***Since being in the media industry. What has your biggest achievement been?***

There are a few, but my favourite would have to be being in charge of the social media elements of the Miss Universe 2019 #ZoziComesHome campaign, which trended nationally and gained global traction.

Also being mentioned on Bizcommunity for a talk I gave at IABC's Innovating Business Communication Conference in 2016 as a PR Graduate.



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■ ***What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs?***

Plan your finances well and make sure your first business is in line with something you truly believe in.

■ ***If you could travel back in time, what advice would you give yourself?***

Trust yourself and follow your gut.

■ ***Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?***

I love this question! I see myself being recognised as an industry expert and mentor in the digital space. I would also like to venture into other businesses such as bee farming and textile development as those are other interests of mine.

■ ***As we celebrate Youth Month, do you have any words of encouragement for the youth?***

Don't stop believing in yourself and trust the process.

“ *The benefit of being the 'youth' is that we can learn from the mistakes of those who came before us.* ”

Take the time you need to master your craft and work on yourself so that you can build a solid foundation for the dreams you wish to achieve.

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